

Fw: Meeting with Chief White's Staff on Bay Model, Etc.
Kelly Shenk to: Daniel Ryan

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NRCS Chief White discussions on model.
Kelly Shenk
Agricultural Policy Coordinator
U.S. EPA Chesapeake Bay Program Office
410 Severn Avenue, Suite 112
Annapolis, Maryland 21403
phone: 410-267-5728
fax: 410-267-5777

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Meeting with Chief White's Staff on Bay Model, Etc.

Kelly Shenk to: Richard Batiuk, Robert Koroncai, Shenk.Gary, Sweeney.Jeff,
Travis Loop, Katherine Antos, swphilli

02/07/2010 02:01 PM

Cc: Jeff Lape, Edward.james, Chuck Fox, Lawrence Elworth, Julie Winters, mdubin,
Roberta Parry, Hank Zygmunt

Hi Rich, Bob, Lewis, Gary, Jeff, Travis, Katherine, and Scott,
Larry Elworth, Ag Counselor to the EPA Administrator, and I had a really good meeting with
NRCS on Thursday regarding the CB Watershed Model and the Bay TMDL.

As I mentioned to many of you before, this meeting was scheduled as a follow up to a meeting
that NRCS Chief, Dave White, held with national and Bay ag industry representatives about the
Bay model, TMDL, etc. As you know, there is an effort underway by national and Bay
agricultural groups to derail the Bay TMDL and rulemakings – with a big focus on discrediting
the Bay Watershed model. In fact, at the meeting with Chief White, the ag industry was pushing
for USDA Secretary Vilsack to write a letter to Administrator Jackson discrediting the model.

Our follow up meeting with Chief White's staff was very constructive and we came up with a
number of action items that affect the Bay modelers, the TMDL folks, and the communicators.
So please take some time to read this summary and hopefully we can discuss in more detail at an
upcoming FHTE meeting. Thanks! K

Participants:

Larry Elworth, Ag Counselor to Administrator, EPA
Kelly Shenk, Ag Policy Coordinator, EPA CBPO
Roberta Parry, EPA Headquarters, very experienced with NRCS CEAP work.
Rick Swenson, Special Assistant, Strategic Natural Resources Initiatives, NRCS (Chief White
asked him to follow up with EPA on these issues)
Glenn Carpenter, National Leader, Animal Husbandry, NRCS (Beltsville) (will be NRCS point
of contact for all discussions on CB Watershed Model)

Doug Lawrence, Deputy Chief, Soil Survey and Resource Assessment,
Daryl Lund, NRCS, Branch Chief, Resources Inventory and Assessment Division, NRCS
Jay Atwood, NRCS, Resources Inventory and Assessment Division, NRCS, Economist
Lee Norfleet, NRCS, Resources Inventory and Assessment Division, Soil Scientist
Bob Kellogg (invited, not sure if he was on call), NRCS, CEAP National Assessment, Cropland

Issues Addressed:

- **Agricultural Industry Concerns about Chesapeake Bay Activities:** As I already informed you, NRCS Chief, Dave White, called a meeting with agricultural industry representatives (national groups and their Bay affiliates: Farm Bureau, corn growers, national chicken council, poultry and eggs, etc.) to discuss Bay activities. I heard that he was under a lot of pressure to reconnect with the ag industry after his unpopular decision to reassign Dana York. The agricultural representatives expressed concerns about:
 - Bay Watershed Model (claimed lack of transparent process, faulty assumptions, and incomplete accounting of conservation). They were pushing for USDA Secretary Vilsack to write a letter to EPA Administrator Jackson regarding model concerns. NRCS wants “to be given access” to the model and meet with our Bay modelers to discuss the model in more detail. Attached is a briefing I pulled together about the model for the meeting (with great input from Lewis, Gary, and Jeff).
 - TMDL – worried that TMDL is based on faulty model (likely attempt to use concerns about the model to stop the entire TMDL process).
 - Rulemakings and fears for what it may mean nationally.
- **EPA Concerns about Lack of Coordination with NRCS on Chesapeake CEAP:** EPA expressed concerns at lack of transparency and coordination with NRCS on Chesapeake Conservation Effectiveness Assessment Project (CEAP) that is underway in the watershed. NRCS has not shared anything about its Chesapeake CEAP project with EPA and other key Bay partners. This project will report on agricultural implementation levels, BMP effectiveness, agricultural loads, and likely water quality trends. It is critical that we understand what they are doing, what models they are using, and the preliminary findings so that we can explain these results in relationship to what the Bay Watershed Model says. NRCS recently conducted a “Conservation Effectiveness Assessment Project” study in the Upper Mississippi River Basin. This report has not been shared with EPA yet and is scheduled to be released in late February or early March.
- **EPA Push to get USDA Fully Briefed on Bay TMDL:** EPA sees a great need for USDA and NRCS to be more fully briefed on the Bay TMDL in order to more clearly define their role in helping to support the states in meeting their WIPs and 2-year milestones. Their involvement in the TMDL outreach meetings has not been comprehensive and key leaders are lacking a good working understanding of the TMDL, the timeframe, and EPA’s role in reviewing and approving state programs and Watershed Implementation Plans.

Actions/Decisions:

- **CB Watershed Model:** Over the next three months, Glenn Carpenter, NRCS, will meet with CB Watershed Modelers to review model, data, and assumptions and provide any feedback.